

REMARKS:

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1,2, 4-8, 10-14 and 16-19. New claim 20 is added. No new matter is presented. Claims 3, 9 and 15 remain cancelled. Thus, claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10-14 and 16-20 are pending and under consideration. The rejections are traversed below.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10-14 and 16-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over various combinations of: U.S. Patent No. 5,938,725 (Hara), U.S. Patent No. 5,878,230 (Weber) and U.S. Patent No. 6,671,718 (Meister).

Hara extracts a mail address based on a keyword entered by a user and uses the extracted mail address as a destination for transmitting a message. For example, as shown in FIG. 2, an e-mail message containing an inputted keyword is retrieved from a storage apparatus, and the address of the retrieved e-mail message is used as a destination address for transmitting a message (see also, col. 6, line 64 through col. 7, line 9). That is, according to the Hara method, a global address of an e-mail message extracted based on the keyword is used to transmit a message to all addresses listed in the global address.

Further, Weber is directed to a reply override operation where addresses specified by an original sender are used as the primary address field (see, col. 5, lines 18-23), and Meister is directed to alerting a sender of a message when a computer initiates an unauthorized message (see, FIG. 5 and corresponding text).

In contrast, the present invention prevents an e-mail from being transmitted to all destination addresses in a mailing list by allowing selection from the destination addresses in the mailing list. For example, the present invention determines whether a destination address is of a mailing list capable of broadcasting an e-mail to all recipients in the mailing list, and allows selection from the addresses in the mailing list to prevent unwanted transmission of the e-mail to all the recipients in the mailing list (see, page 15, line 19 through page 16, line 22). This enables the present invention to provide an option of selecting specific addresses from addresses in a mailing list to prevent an e-mail from being transmitted to every destination address in the mailing list.

The invention extracts an address in an e-mail only when the destination address is part of the mailing list (i.e., without extracting any mail address when the mail address is not of the mailing list) to allow selection of addresses in the mailing list.

Independent claim 1, by way of example, recites that judging “whether a reply destination mail address extracted from an E-mail received is an address of a mailing list capable of broadcasting the same E-mail to a plurality of destinations at one time by a predetermined single mail address.” Claim 1 further recites that the present invention “automatically extracts at least one mail address contained in a text of the E-mail when the reply destination mail address is the address of the mailing list” and “does not extract any mail address contained in the text of the E-mail received when the reply destination mail address is not the address of the mailing list.” Independent claims 2, 7, 8, 13 and 14 also recite similar features.

Independent claim 19 also recites, “broadcasting the electronic mail to the terminal devices corresponding to the designated destination addresses of the mailing list using a single mail address in accordance with the determination whether a reply destination address is included in the destination addresses of the mailing list.”

It is submitted that the independent claims are patentable over the cited references.

For at least the above-mentioned reasons, claims depending from the independent claims are patentably distinguishable over the cited references. The dependent claims are also independently patentable. For example, claim 6 recites, “a display unit which displays, when visibly displaying all the extracted mail addresses as the reply destination candidates, the name of the mail address extracted from the text of the received E-mail and unregistered in the mail address book as the name unknown in the format of corresponding to the mail address.” The cited references, alone or in combination, do not teach or these features of claim 6.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIM:

New claim 20 is added to emphasize that the present invention includes determining “whether a reply destination of the electronic mail is part of a mailing list having multiple destination addresses” and allows “selecting” therefrom for transmitting the electronic mail “only to the at least one destination address in the mailing list based on said selecting.”

The cited references, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest, “determining whether a reply destination of the electronic mail is part of a mailing list having multiple

destination addresses" and "selecting" therefrom for transmitting "only to the at least one destination address in the mailing list based on said selecting", as recited in claim 20.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that new claim 20 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

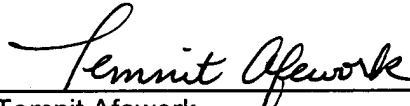
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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